The Issue: It is not enough to select a literacy curriculum and place the guide and materials in the educator’s hands. Effective curricular implementation is a process, led by a leadership team, that is focused on providing educators with ongoing support to deliver high-quality literacy instruction.

What Are Some Common Pitfalls That Impede Impact?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Pitfalls</th>
<th>What We’re Learning</th>
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<td>1. Educators are provided a day’s training and a manual, but not on-going support with curriculum implementation.</td>
<td>1. Instruction improves when the site’s leaders provide educators with the necessary support and training to implement a curriculum with fidelity (see Memos 8 &amp; 9).</td>
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<td>2. A curriculum is adopted but not delivered by all educators consistently or as intended (e.g., “dipping” in and out).</td>
<td>2. Children need to experience consistent learning routines; they benefit from a long-term, content-rich learning plan that will help them accumulate skills and knowledge over time (see Memos 4 &amp; 15).</td>
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<td>3. Educators are held accountable for implementing a curriculum with fidelity, but often not provided with adequate support or opportunities to collaborate.</td>
<td>3. Effective implementation takes time, requires leadership support, and demands opportunities to collaborate; even the highest quality materials do not automatically translate into better practice.</td>
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Key Strategies for Impact:
A checklist for the leadership team

- Develop your own knowledge of the curriculum.
  Why? Leadership needs a firm understanding of a new curriculum to provide effective guidance and support.

- Provide educators with training opportunities before and during implementation, and personally participate. Training should include:
  - A rationale for the curriculum’s design and lessons
  - Guidance on how to carry out the various components of the curriculum
  **Why?** Curricula are not intuitive and therefore require ongoing training. Continuous training improves implementation quality, builds collective commitment to the curriculum, and gets new staff up to speed.

- Set up and perform regular formal and informal observations of educators using the curriculum.
  - Gather specific information on educators’ strengths and needs
  - Monitor the quality of curriculum implementation
  **Why?** Information obtained through classroom observations can be used for tailoring professional development to educators’ needs, and ensuring all children experience comparable instruction.

- Facilitate conversations about instructional practice and improvement.
  **Why?** A curriculum provides a shared professional language that enables educators to discuss and refine their instructional practices during meetings and planning time.

- Make curricular materials available to address the individual needs of struggling or at-risk students, as well as children who need enrichment.
  **Why?** Individualized student support is most effective when it corresponds with classroom learning.

For More on This...
- The [National Center on Response to Intervention](http://www.interventioncentral.org) features guidance and tools for implementing school-wide practices
- [McREL Keys to Learning](http://www.mcrel.org) has a section on implementing curriculum effectively
- [Fidelity of Implementation within an RTI Framework](http://www.fidelityofimplementation.com) by Daryl Mellard is a free publication online that has sample observation checklists

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